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SUCCESSION

SUBJECT: FREEDOM AGENDA: PM OUTLINES GOK PRIORITIES AS NEW
CABINET AND CROWN PRINCE SWORN IN

REF: KUWAIT 527

¶1. (U) In a February 20 speech to the National Assembly following the swearing in of the new Cabinet, Prime Minister Shaykh Nasser Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah outlined the Government's priorities, which included approval of the Press and Publications Law, Project Kuwait, and amendment of the electoral constituencies (reftels). Noting that the new Government would "adopt the previous Government's program," he said emphasis would be put on enacting the proposed five-year plan, which he said would be submitted to Parliament "soon."

¶2. (U) PM Shaykh Nasser Mohammed also expressed in general terms the Government's support for strengthening democracy, combating terrorism and crime, "activating" the private sector, developing the educational system, ensuring respect for and equal enforcement of the law, improving the country's infrastructure, reducing bureaucracy, "denouncing" violence and encouraging moderation, and assisting civil society institutions in their efforts to "boost the development process" in Kuwait. Shaykh Nasser Mohammed called for Parliament to "partner" with the Government in achieving these goals and emphasized the need for greater "constructive dialogue." He noted, however, that with only one year and a half before the next parliamentary elections, Kuwaitis "need to be realistic about what is achievable."

¶3. (U) The session was followed immediately by a special session in which Parliament unanimously approved the appointment of Shaykh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as the new Crown Prince. The Crown Prince took his oath shortly after the vote, thus completing the formalities installing the new Kuwaiti political constellation.

¶4. (U) Full biographies on the members of the new Cabinet and the Crown Prince are available on the embassy's classified website.

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